



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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Planning 2.0: BLM Takes Major Step toward Modernizing Planning Process, Increasing Public Involvement

Proposed Changes Set Stage for Upfront Collaboration, Planning Across Landscapes

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today announced a major step as part of its Planning 2.0 initiative to modernize the agency’s planning process and increase public involvement in the management of 245 million acres of public lands the agency directs. The new approach will make future land-use planning more collaborative, transparent, and effective. The changes will increase opportunities for early engagement by state and local government, Tribes and other stakeholders in BLM’s land-use decision-making while adopting a broader landscape-scale, science-based approach to managing public lands and incorporate modern technology into the agency’s planning process.

“The changes we are proposing will improve our ability to respond to today’s environmental, economic and social realities, including the need to have strong science, early and regular public input and a landscape-level approach to natural resource challenges and opportunities,” said Janice Schneider, Interior’s Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management. “The revisions will enable us to be more agile in addressing challenges like proliferating invasive species and wildfire, helping to meet the Nation’s need for energy, and conserving important wildlife habitat. At the same time, these proposals are carefully crafted to bolster our commitment to working early and often at the local level with our partners.”

The proposed regulations are part of the BLM’s ongoing Planning 2.0 initiative, an effort that strives to rethink the resource management plans that provide the framework for the management of public lands. The proposal will make changes to regulations that are guided by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The original regulations were first completed in 1979 and later revised in 1983 and 2005.

By implementing these improvements, the BLM seeks to enhance the way it involves the public in its planning efforts, including measures to provide more meaningful participation, and make it easier for people to see how their input influences planning decisions. In a related effort, the BLM is revising its land use planning handbook that provides detailed guidance on implementing the planning processes. The agency anticipates releasing a draft of the handbook for review this summer.

Planning 2.0 will also improve the BLM's ability to address landscape-scale resource issues and use landscape-level management approaches to more efficiently and effectively manage public lands. The changes will also give the BLM the opportunity to establish a stronger geospatial foundation to its decision-making, allowing it to gather and share more accurate data with the public.

"The BLM's land use plans serve as the foundation for everything we do to manage the public lands on behalf of the American people," BLM Director Neil Kornze said. "Managing the public's land is a tremendous honor for the employees of this agency, and our work depends on close cooperative relationships with partners and local communities. Today's announcement builds on the work we do every day to provide opportunities for the public to be a part of managing these incredible landscapes."

The new planning approach is contained in a proposed rule, posted today at www.blm.gov/plan2. The BLM will accept comments on these proposed regulatory changes for 60 days after the publication in the *Federal Register*. The BLM will be scheduling public meetings, including a webinar, to provide an overview of the proposed regulation changes along with a question and answer session which will be announced separately. It will also be conducting tribal consultations on this issue.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2014, the BLM generated \$5.2 billion in receipts from public lands.

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